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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (12 Nov 68) FOR OT RD 683214

20 November 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry, Period Ending 31 July 1968 (U)

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BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

**KENNETH G. WICKHAM
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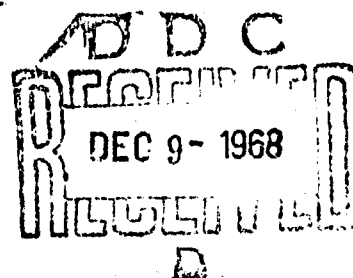
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 7TH ARMORED SQUADRON, 1ST AIR CAVALRY
APO San Francisco 96357

AVRM-JC

31 July 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 7th Armored Squadron 1st Air Cavalry For
Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

I. Section I, Operations:

a. Significant Activities:

(1) Personnel:

(a) The Squadron S-1 and Personnel Section began preparation for movement to Vinh Long during the latter part of April and the first week of May. On 5 May the administrative portion of the squadron headquarters moved to Vinh Long from Di An. The movement proved to be premature as operational commitments of A and B Troops required the S-1 and Personnel Section to return to Di An in order to properly support both troops. The Squadron was to be reassigned to 164th Combat Aviation Group from 12th Combat Aviation Group effective 5 May 1968. Operational commitments precluded the planned reassignment and delayed it indefinitely. On 5 May 68, LTC Charles E. Canedy, the Squadron Commander, received a severe leg wound when his CFC ship was hit by enemy fire while controlling the operation, and he was medically evacuated. LTC Robert W. Mills, Executive Officer of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion and previous Executive Officer of the 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry, returned to the "Blackhawks" and assumed command on 6 May 1968.

(b) On 12 May 1968 the Squadron S-1 and Personnel Section returned to Vinh Long. Administrative support of the Squadron was difficult during the period 12 May to 8 June 1968 while A, B and elements of D and Headquarters Troops remained at Di An, and C Troop along with elements of D and Headquarters Troops were located at Vinh Long. A significant factor which permitted the administrative headquarters to function effectively in spite of the disposition of organic tactical units and the difficulty in communicating with 12th Combat Aviation Group was the excellent working area provided the Personnel and S-1 sections at Vinh Long upon relocation.

(c) Upon arrival at Vinh Long the squadron Finance Section was co-located with the supporting finance unit at Can Tho.

(d) The Squadron was reassigned to 164th Combat Aviation Group on 3 June 1968 (General Orders Number 3610 HQ 1st Avn Bde dated 8 June 1968). B Troop was attached to 12th Combat Aviation Group for all purposes less transfer, promotion, and requisition authority which remained with this unit. However, it became readily apparent that the Squadron could not provide the necessary administrative support for B Troop from Vinh Long. Coordination with 12th Combat Aviation Group and 1st Aviation Brigade resulted in the

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attachment of B Troop to 12th Combat Aviation Group for all purposes on 14 June 1968 (General Orders Number 3881 HQ 1st Avn Bde dated 19 June 1968).

(e) During the latter part of June and the month of July, infusion continued to be a priority project for the S-1. Officer and Warrant Officer infusion will be completed within the time frame prescribed by USARV Regulation 614-9. Considerable difficulty has been encountered regarding enlisted infusion. Positive action has been taken to initiate the program; the difficulty lies within the particular MOS and skills required by the Air Cavalry Squadron and earmarking similar units with which to infuse. Problem areas have been referred through appropriate command channels for action. Completion of the enlisted infusion program is anticipated in December.

(f) Critical shortages remain the enlisted combat MOS structure (11B,C,D,H) with the most serious shortcomings being the 11B and 11D E5 and E6 slots. Officer and Warrant Officer replacements during the reporting period have increased considerably.

(g) On 29 July the following maintenance units arrived at Vinh Long to join the squadron:

370th Transportation Detachment
371st Transportation Detachment
3d Signal Detachment
819th Signal Detachment

The 370th TC Detachment and 819th Signal Detachment were attached to A Troop.

The 371st TC Detachment and 3d Signal Detachment were attached to C Troop.

(h) The Squadron continues to fill 100% of its R/R allocations with a standing waiting list.

(i) During the reporting period, awards and decorations have been recommended and approved as follows:

<u>Award</u>	<u>Recommended</u>	<u>Approved</u>	<u>Disord/Unord</u>		<u>Disapproved</u>	<u>Pending</u>
DSC	1	0	0	0	0	1
SS	18	5	1	0	0	12
DPC	42	15	0	0	0	18
SN	1	0	0	0	0	1
BSM"V"	21	10	1	0	0	10
AM"V"	42	7	2	0	0	33
LM	1	0	0	0	0	1
BSM	8	2	0	0	0	6
AM	89	66	0	0	0	23
ARCOM"V"	28	18	0	1	0	9
ARCOM	11	1	0	0	0	10
PH	45	42	0	0	0	3
CIB	16	8	0	0	4	4
CIB	12	0	0	0	12	0
Cert/Lent	2	0	0	0	0	2

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(2) Operations:

(a) The Squadron (-) started the month of May with the troops remaining operational while preparing for a unit move to Vinh Long. B Troop remained in support of the 1st Infantry Division at Di An (XS9105). A series of six convoys were scheduled from 4-12 May to complete the unit move with D Troop providing security for the movement of these elements.

(b) On 4 May 1968, while preparing for movement, A Troop was diverted from its respective operational area to a location 2 km northeast of Di An (XS9105) to check out a report of 200 VC in vicinity of coordinates XS925143. A Troop engaged what turned out to be the 5th VC Dong Nai Regiment in an eight hour battle ending by nightfall. D Troop committed 2 platoons to be inserted with A Troop's infantry platoon to sweep the area. The Squadron (-) was credited with 134 VC KIA for the day's operation. The following morning A Troop again worked the same area of the previous days activities and was credited with an additional 78 VC KIA. Just northeast of the active area, A Troop encountered two 50 caliber positions and confirmed an additional 58 VC KIA. One 50 caliber was captured and one destroyed during the days operation. A Troop temporarily halted all movement preparations and remained ORCON to the 1st Infantry Division until 26 May, 1968. During this period, A Troop accounted for a total of 344 VC KIA (EC). A Troop commenced the move to Vinh Long on 27 May and closed on 29 May, 1968.

(c) B Troop was placed ORCON to the 9th U.S. Infantry Division on 5 May 1968 and remained in this status until 5 June 1968. B Troop was credited with 161 VC KBA (EC) during this period working in and around the Saigon, Tan An, and Dong Tam area. The Troop was attached to the 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry, staging out of Di An (XS9105) on 14 June 1968.

(d) C Troop was ORCON to the IVth CTZ remaining at Vinh Long (XS0433) during the reporting period, conducting operations within the Delta. The primary emphasis of missions from 4-29 May 68 was involved with the 44th Special Zone and the 9th U.S. Infantry Division. C Troop accounted for a total of 156 VC KIA (EC) during this period.

(e) The Squadron (-) closed Vinh Long on 29 May 68, and began operations to establish a base camp and perimeter security.

(f) The "Blackhawks" became operational at Vinh Long on 4 June 68. The Squadron was given the primary mission of conducting OPERATION BLACKHAWK in the 44th Special Tactical Zone. A secondary mission was to provide one Air Cav Troop to support each of the three ARVN divisions each week. A and C Troops conducted border surveillance and interdiction along the Cambodian border within the 44th STZ. A Troop's area of operation was Chau Doc and Kien Giang Provinces staging out of Chi Lang. C Troop's area of operation was in Kien Phuoc and Kien Tuong Provinces staging out of Loc Hoa. D Troop supported, as required, in either area on a mission type basis. Each Air Cav Troop established liaison capabilities at their respective staging areas. The mission consisted of reconnaissance, search and destroy operations conducted on a 24 hour basis in specified areas as determined by the 44th STZ intelligence information. Additionally, night interdiction missions were accomplished using OVI/HLG hunter-killer teams in pre-determined locations.

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along the border. IRRP's were used periodically by both Air Cav Troops to observe and report the movement of VC across the border during the hours of darkness. Fire Teams and a flare ship remained on standby at the staging area to react to target information. IRRP's were inserted at last light and extracted at first light the following day. The Squadron (-) conducted OPERATION BLACKHAWK with two (2) Air Cav Troops except when required to provide one troop weekly in support of 9th, 7th, and 21st ARVN Division operations.

(g) During OPERATION BLACKHAWK, C Troop, on 28 June 68, uncovered one of the largest ammo caches found in Vietnam. The find was made in the vicinity of the Parrot's Beak (XS304929). Negative enemy activity or contact was made in the area and Mike Forces were inserted to secure the area until all findings were evacuated to Moc Hoa. See Inclosure #3. A large weapons and ammo cache was also discovered by A Troop on 1 July 68 southwest of Chi Lang vicinity (VS875430); see Inclosure #4. The cumulative results of OPERATION BLACKHAWK are listed in Inclosure #5.

(h) The Squadron (-) was called off OPERATION BLACKHAWK from 11 to 19 July 1968 for an operation with the 44th Special Tactical Zone in the vicinity of the Seven Mountains in the northwestern part of the Delta (VS985475). A and D Troops backed by C Troop, under squadron control, participated with the 44th Special Tactical Zone units in an operation to seize and exploit a VC dominated mountain in Chau Doc Province. The operation proved the ability of the ARVN and American Troops to exploit and hold the mountain for an extended period of time. D Troop confirmed 13 KIA during the operation while providing a blocking force along the base of the mountain.

(i) A chart of cumulative results for the reporting period for the Squadron is attached as Inclosure #1.

(j) The breakdown of days the units were engaged by type activity during the reporting period is as follows:

1	Training days	0
2	Troop Movement	10
3	Operational	82
	TOTAL DAYS	92

(3) Intelligence:

(a) Squadron Liaison:

After the completion of the Squadron movement from Di An (III Corps) to Vinh Long (IV Corps), the S-2 experienced difficulties in establishing a direct intelligence information flow within the IV Corps area. A liaison effort was made to collect all information pertaining to enemy activity, cache sites, base camp areas, infiltration routes and last unit sightings within the areas of operation. Intelligence agencies within the IV CTZ were visited to include each of the three ARVN Division (7th, 9th and 21st), the IV Corps G-2, the 44th Special Tactical Zone G-2, and the 164th Combat Aviation Group S-2. Each liaison visit resulted in the same problem areas being discussed; that is, dissemination of intelligence to the user. Daily accurate intelligence is necessary for the Squadron to accomplish its assigned

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mission anywhere in the Delta area. A liaison visit with the S-2, 164th Combat Aviation Group established intelligence support from the aviation resources within the Delta. This allows intelligence to be filtered back to the Squadron from fixed wing aircraft permanently stationed in various provinces and district towns in the IV Corps CTZ.

(b) Presently, all available intelligence information is still not reaching the Squadron. The collection effort, formulation of ESI and a collection plan are established. Intsums from the Squadron covering daily enemy activity and enemy sightings within the Troop/Squadron area of operation are prepared and sent by secure RTT to the S-2, 164th Combat Aviation Group. ARVN Divisions, Province, District and IV Corps Intsums are being sent by counterpart/advisors, to the Squadron to provide better intelligence of the entire area. These intsums, however, are usually 24 to 36 hours old on receipt; thus the intelligence effort does not contain timely intelligence for quick operational reaction. This late intelligence does not permit the Squadron to keep an accurate updated enemy situation. The Squadron may be called upon to operate in any given operational area at any time.

(c) In anticipation of the Squadron movement to the IV Corps area, maps were requisitioned and were on hand when the Squadron arrived within the Delta area. It has been found, after operations within the Delta, that the most practical maps to use are 1:50,000 and 1:100,000. The 1:100,000 map provides adequate coverage of the area of operation and allows detailed references to aviation personnel flying at low altitudes with a mission of visual reconnaissance. Most ground units within the Delta plan operations using 1:50,000 maps.

(d) A request for ARVN interpreter personnel to be assigned to the Squadron on a permanent basis was sent to the Commanding Officer, 164th Combat Aviation Group on 11 June 1968. The assignment of these interpreters will enhance this unit's reconnaissance capability within the Delta area, combat effectiveness, reduce the language barrier, and expedite interrogation and rapid reaction. The request included one ARVN officer for each troop to act as a counterpart. The interpreter would be utilized in each Air Cav Troop to accompany the aero-rifle platoon and within D Troop three (3) would be required to accompany each reconnaissance platoon. The arrival of B Troop would create an additional requirement of one officer and one interpreter. Presently the Squadron has received eight (8) interpreters which have been assigned to the troops presently located here.

(e) Within the IV Corps CTZ, the Squadron's daily mission places one or both Air Cav Troops and/or the ground troop OPCOM to either a ARVN Division or to the 44th Special Tactical Zone. POW collection and interrogation takes place within ARVN channels, thus losing much intelligence gathering information. It is felt that this Squadron should be augmented with US Military Intelligence personnel or equivalent ARVN interrogation teams to properly process these personnel. Intelligence received from these PW's could then be acted upon in a most timely and expeditious manner.

(f) Captured weapons collected within the IV Corps CTZ, as with the POW collection, by Squadron personnel again goes to the respective unit with which the Squadron/Troop is working. No accountability exists after they are evacuated.

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(g) Perimeter security of Vinh Long Airfield complex has been greatly improved since the arrival of the Squadron. Installation of 15 foot towers, bunkers, 106mm RR positions and 81mm mortar positions have been completed. Additional towers are being built. Nightly, the Squadron provides perimeter defense in one-half of the Vinh Long Airfield perimeter. This entails a force of 67 armed Squadron personnel, 3 - 81mm mortars and crews, 2 - 106mm RR weapons and crews, and a ready reaction force of two platoons of D Troop on a nightly standby. A problem exists within perimeter security defense when the Squadron is involved in a operation requiring the Squadron units to remain away from home base for more than daylight hours. This leaves the Squadron perimeter sector to be manned and defended by Squadron (-).

(4) Safety:

(a) There were seven (7) accidents during May, June and July. Six occurred in the OH-6A, one in the AH-1G. Following is a brief resume of these accidents.

1 C Troop; OH-6A, 14 May: Material failure, fuel hose. Aircraft experienced engine failure, crashed and sustained major damage.

2 B Troop; OH-6A, 14 May: Fuel exhaustion (fuel gauge stuck at 170 pounds indicated), aircraft crashed and sustained major damage.

3 B Troop; OH-6A, 27 May: Aircraft took off, maintenance was working on aircraft, had not released it. Fuel hose was not attached. Aircraft crashed and sustained major damage.

4 A Troop; OH-6A, 3 June: Anti-torque failure, aircraft crashed and sustained total damage.

5 C Troop; OH-6A, 11 June: Anti-torque failure, aircraft crashed and sustained major damage.

6 A Troop; OH-6A, 8 July: Aircraft settled with power, crashed and sustained total damage.

7 A Troop; AH-1G, 15 July: Aircraft flew into ground on night mission. Aircraft sustained total damage.

(b) No trend has been established in these accidents. Although loss of anti-torque was a factor in two OH-6A's, the failures were in different components. Even though a trend is not present, a pattern does make itself quite apparent. The OH-6A's and AH-1G's fly approximately the same number of hours. UH-1G's and UH-1H's fly fewer hours but are still present on most missions. However, out of seven accidents during the ORLL period, six were in the OH-6A's. Data are by no means widespread or comprehensive enough to analyze and deduce meaningful conclusions from this fact. If, however, this pattern is country wide, it is recommended that a study be made to determine cause factors involved and alleviate them.

(c) Loose sand and other materials on the parking ramp and around revetments continues to be a problem. Constant deterioration of the penaprime surface is aggravated by rotor wash. Nearly one pound of penaprime was found

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in the engine inlet of a OH-6A.

(d) Increased command emphasis on safety has manifested itself in improved flying techniques. Due to this constant emphasis, our people have become safety conscious and we anticipate a lower accident rate in the future.

(5) Communications:

(a) In May the Squadron was involved in moving from Di An to Vinh Long. During the move it was necessary to maintain both forward and rear area communications. Because of the limited capability of the TON equipment and personnel, we were spread to the maximum. The Squadron radio and wire nets were operational in Di An until the last week of the month to support the Headquarters TOC in continuing our mission. This also afforded a dual means of coordinating the movement of troops and equipment to Vinh Long. A bare minimum of personnel were kept for the operating of the equipment while the majority of the men were sent ahead to build and prepare the new area for immediate control.

(b) Teletype and voice communications were maintained with the 12th Combat Aviation Group until the middle of May. The teletype circuit was deactivated first so the crypto equipment could be stored at Tan Son Nhut. This was necessary since the crypto area was destroyed and the new area at Vinh Long had not been completed. Voice communication was maintained with 12th Combat Aviation Group until the third week and then the Squadron left the net. For the last portion of the month all communications were maintained with the 1st Aviation Brigade.

(c) In Vinh Long, work was progressing very rapidly. The temporary TOC was nearing completion by the first of June and the COMBAT TON was being added by utilizing conexas. The field wire system was operational by the end of the first day since the preparation had included laying the line to each subscriber. Additional fringe subscribers were added later as time permitted. AN Communications were established with 164th Combat Aviation Group and the AN/VSC2 working with 1st Aviation Brigade was deactivated, during the first week. A second AN/VSC2 was activated during the first week to communicate with B Troop, which had remained behind at Di An.

(d) Throughout the remainder of June, improvement of the COMBATER area was continued, and the installation of dial telephones was started. The basic plan for essential dial telephones was given to the Area Communication Center in the latter part of May. The initial plan consisted of approximately twenty (20) lines, which were for the HQ staff, Squadron TOC, and the troop HQ's and TOC's. Discussion with the Detachment Commander of C/52d Signal Battalion revealed that the capability of the existing cable in the Squadron temporary location was seventeen (17) lines which would have been sufficient had all been serviceable. As establishment of the system progressed, cable after cable turned bad; as a result of this defective cable, a five pair cable was installed by 7/1 Commo Platoon. This enabled the priority lines to be installed and added a dual system to the Dial Central Office.

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(e) Signal Maintenance for the Squadron was not available in Vinh Long, so a equipment density list was submitted to the 51st Maintenance Battalion in Can Tho. The maintenance facility is equipped and manned to provide direct support. However, the backlog and resulting delay made it necessary to seek support elsewhere. A Vietnamese General Support Facility in Vinh Long accepted job requests on any wire equipment, AM radios, and AN/PRC 25's. However, they did not have the capability to repair any AN/VRC 12 series radios or associated equipment. As of this date, the AN/VRC 12 series radios and components are being taken to the 51st Maintenance Battalion, but the necessary repair work is not being accomplished. Twenty-two (22) pieces of equipment including twelve AT524/VRC have accumulated since June and there is still no progress being made.

(f) Throughout the period the majority of our effort was spent in construction and establishment of communications. The two most serious problems during the reporting period were encountered with the dial telephones and signal maintenance. By the end of July, the availability of dial service for the period was less than 50% even though the Squadron has installed a second five pair cable and repair was being accomplished at the rate of approximately one item every two to three weeks.

(6) Logistics and Transportation

(a) During the month of May and the first few days of June, the Squadron (-) completed a move to Vinh Long. On the morning of 4 May, 1968, Troop D and the advance elements of A Troop departed Di An for Vinh Long by convoy. They closed Vinh Long that evening with all vehicles. On 2 June 68, the last convoy closed Vinh Long. During the period 4 May 68 to 2 June 68, eighty-two (82) stake and platform truck loads were moved to Vinh Long. These trucks were furnished by the 48th Transportation Group on the direction of Saigon Support Command Movement Control Center. Additionally, all Squadron vehicles assigned to HHT, A, and D Troops carried full loads. The USAF hauled 91 passengers with 200 lbs of baggage each from Di An to Vinh Long. A 164th Combat Aviation Group Chinook hauled 19 passengers with 2,000 lbs of cargo from Di An to Vinh Long to establish the forward CP. The USN provided two LST's which hauled conaxes, lumber, tents, and other equipment from Newport to Vinh Long. A contract ABAT barge moved a load of non-mission essential equipment from Newport to Vinh Long. D Troop provided escort for each convoy with one platoon. On two occasions sniper fire was received by the convoy. Each time the escort platoon maneuvered their 106mm recoilless rifles into position and silenced the snipers. Only two vehicles were damaged by mines during the entire period of the movement and there was no serious injuries. This is especially significant considering that the convoys had to move through Saigon during the second TET Offensive period.

(b) The most difficult problem this Squadron had to cope with was insufficient time between notification and time of movement. MACV would issue a movement order. Each headquarters down the line would take a few days to process the order. By the time we received the order, we had insufficient time to react. We were never an INFO addressee on any message. The moving unit needs the most lead time to prepare for movement, not the controlling headquarters

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(c) The Saigon Support Command Movement Control Center provided outstanding support. This was not the case with requests through TMA for LST's. It required almost 30 days to receive the first LST after the requests and TCM's were hand carried to TMA. The requests for USAF transport of passengers was expedited by TMA and outstanding support was provided.

(d) During our stay at Di An the 1st SGT Battalion of the 1st Infantry Division provided our Class I support. This support was outstanding, providing more than adequate supplies of milk, ice cream, fresh eggs and ice. At Vinh Long we are supported by the 1st ICG Command Class I Activity located at Can Tho. During our first month at Vinh Long this unit received fresh milk only twice and did not receive any ice cream or ice. Several staff visits to the Class I Activity have partially corrected this problem. Transportation seems to be the major problem at the present time.

(e) Class II & IV support was secured direct from the 14th ICG and the 208th and 506th Field Depots at Long Binh while the Squadron was based at Di An. Class I & IV support at Vinh Long is provided from Vung Tau. Transportation is a very serious problem. There is normally a 60 to 90 days lapse between date of requisition and date of receipt of supplies at Vinh Long. This requires more precise forecasts of supplies and equipment that will be needed.

(f) Class III & V supplies are generally available throughout the IV Corps area. Most locations have inadequate storage facilities and therefore cannot support sustained operations without air resupply. Request for a large Class V storage area at Can Tho and a smaller one at Vinh Long have been approved. As soon as suitable real estate is procured, these facilities will be constructed. These facilities will provide the ready reserve necessary for operations in this area. Adequate facilities for Class V are needed in many locations, especially those located near the border. Adequate Class III facilities should also be constructed at several operational bases located near the border.

(g) Adequate troop billets are being constructed by both Squadron Troop labor and the 69th Engineer Battalion. Five 120-man type barracks have been constructed by the engineers. Twenty-seven orderly rooms, supply rooms, flight operations, and BOQ type buildings have been constructed by Squadron Troop labor. Six more troop barracks will be constructed in the near future plus a squadron headquarters building.

(h) Aircraft maintenance hangars have been approved for the squadron but construction has not begun. Temporary structures (tent, small tin buildings) presently in use seriously restrict the efficiency of the maintenance operations.

(i) There are no storage facilities available to the squadron except in tents and conex containers. Security of equipment and supplies in tents has been a problem.

(j) A large Squadron Motor Pool and S-4 Storage Yard is being graded and drained at present. Construction of these facilities should begin shortly.

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I. Section II, Lessons Learned

A. Commander's Observation, Evaluations and Recommendations

(1) Personnel

(a) AH-1G Qualified Aviators

1 Observation: This organization is authorized 36 AH-1G qualified aviators and presently has 34 assigned; however, the qualified Cobra pilot shortage is magnified by a grade imbalance.

2 Evaluation: Of the 34 assigned AH-1G qualified aviators, six are in the grade of Major or Captain performing command and staff positions other than as Cobra Aviators. This is necessitated by virtue of their grade and experience. Thus the gun platoons are effectively short eight aviators rather than two.

3 Recommendations:

a A greater ratio of warrant officers and junior officers (1st and 2d Lieutenants) be programmed into Cobra transition training rather than senior company grade and field grade officers.

b That sufficient quotas for in-country transition training be granted to meet the minimum needs of the squadron.

(b) Fragmentation of Headquarters Personnel

1 Observation: B Troop was attached to the 12th Combat Aviation Group and further attached to the 3d Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry on 14 June 1968 for all purposes to include personnel promotion, transfer, and requisition authority.

2 Evaluation: The personnel, finance, maintenance and other support section of the headquarters are designed to support the squadron as a whole and cannot be effectively fragmented to support organic units attached to other units. In the case of B Troop, 3/17 ACS requested and received additional support personnel from this unit's headquarters to augment their headquarters element in order to properly support B troop, 7/1 ACS. It is not practical under the present MTOE to fragment the headquarters support personnel (Example: There are three personnel records clerks - 1 officer records and 2 enlisted records - to maintain five (5) Troop's personnel records) to support organic units during a period of attachment.

3 Recommendations:

a That due consideration be given to the administrative aspects as well as the logistical and operational aspects when planning the attachment of a separate Air Cavalry Troop to another organization.

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b That the parent unit retain complete administrative responsibility unless excessive distances and poor communications would prevent adequate support.

c That the receiving unit provide complete administrative support from its own resources if conditions in b above prevail.

(c) Assignment of Officers and Enlisted Men

1 Observation: The infusion program, although efficient in adjusting DEROS dates, is hampering operations since all personnel gained are not necessarily homogeneously trained.

2 Evaluation: The time involved in training infused individuals is considerable and deters from the overall effectiveness of operations during the training period. Training periods vary depending upon the duty assignment; Example - scout or weapons, as opposed to lift crews.

3 Recommendation: Efforts be made to replace infused personnel with like-trained personnel. A study be made at higher levels to determine the overall effect of infusion other than DEROS adjustment.

(d) Non-Crew Member Pay for AH-1G Crew Chiefs

1 Observation: Loss of flight pay has had a detrimental effect on morale of AH-1G crew chiefs.

2 Evaluation: There have been definite morale problems encountered in the AH-1G armed helicopter platoons. Personnel in units where LOH, UH-1H and UH-1C crew chiefs draw flight pay, the AH-1G crew chief feels slighted by his lack of additional pay. This is especially true where the AH-1G crew chiefs have previously crewed aircraft that entitled them to flight pay.

3 Recommendation: That AH-1G crew chiefs be authorized non-crew member flight pay.

(2) Operations:

(a) Visual Reconnaissance

1 Observation: Tight air cover tends to prevent the enemy from exposing himself during search and destroy type missions.

2 Evaluation: When a ground unit is attempting to gain contact with an enemy force, close cover by an Air Cavalry Troop often keeps them hidden in their fortified positions. Ordinarily they would try to evacuate, exposing themselves to friendly fire. Once a superior friendly force has made contact with a fortified force, the enemy chooses to remain in their positions and fight to the last man as long as there is a threat from the armed ships. This results in heavier casualties inflicted upon friendly forces

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than would be if the enemy were allowed to depart from the area.

3 Recommendations: Once it is determined that an enemy force is defending in position, the Air Cavalry resources should be moved to an area that appears not to threaten the enemy's withdrawal. The air elements must remain close enough for immediate reaction when the enemy begins withdrawal.

(b) TOT With CS

1 Observation: The enemy has learned that a time on target artillery strike quite often follows an attack of CS gas on their fortified positions.

2 Evaluation: The policy has been that CS dropped on a fortified target takes a certain amount of time to affect the personnel in fortified positions and in spider holes. After the gas has affected the enemy, a target artillery attack is executed with the purpose of hitting the enemy personnel in the open as they attempt to escape the gas. It has been observed that the enemy has learned to expect the artillery attack and wait until it is over before attempting to escape. Once the artillery fire has ceased, they begin to evacuate their positions.

3 Recommendation: After a CS gas attack, initiate a false time on target artillery attack. Then wait long enough for the greater part of the enemy force to evacuate its positions, considering the effects of the gas, and initiate a full TOT attack.

(c) Employment of Fire Teams

1 Observation: Requests are still being received from supported units for separate fire teams to be used for a strike mission or resupply escort.

2 Evaluation: The integrity of the Air Cavalry unit cannot be maintained when the sections are utilized in separate roles.

3 Recommendation: All units being supported by Air Cavalry operations must be made aware that mission accomplishment is dependent upon all sections of a Air Cavalry Troop working together as a team.

(d) Identification of IRRP's During Night Operations

1 Observation: When IRRP's are used during night operations to pinpoint enemy movements, their exact location is difficult to determine when gun support arrives overhead.

2 Evaluation: An adequate signaling device is necessary on all IRRP's for the purpose of signaling overhead aircraft without giving away their location to enemy in the vicinity.

3 Recommendation: All IRRP's should be equipped with a small pocket strobe light as well as hand held flares to signal aircraft when identification is necessary.

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(e) Utilization of Cobra - Mohawk Hunter Killer Teams

1 Observation: The mission of the Cobra (AH-1G) and Mohawk (OH-1) night border interdiction missions are not obtaining the best results.

2 Evaluation: In order for the hunter-killer team to be effective, a pre-designated free fire zone must be established where gunships can initiate passes as soon as target information is acquired. Presently, when a target is sensed by the Mohawks, the fire teams are required to call and confirm before initiating a firing pass. As soon as flares are dropped, enemy troops or sampans, that are traveling cross-country or on the rivers after dark, will immediately take evasive action or pull over to the side and display flares or lights. Prior to the illumination, boats traveled incognito. By the time a check is complete and clearance is obtained, the target has disappeared, with negative results.

3 Recommendation: Night curfews should be enforced so that any boats found in the rivers after the specified time are free targets. By enforcing the curfew, free fire zones could be established where obvious movements of boats or personnel could be taken under fire without delay for clearance through ARVN channels.

(f) Selection of LZ's

1 Observation: Selection of LZ's for the insertion of infantry elements has too much emphasis on open areas and remaining at least 500 meters from treelines. When the infantry encounters enemy fire, he is pinned down, and the ability to fire and maneuver is lost or restricted.

2 Evaluation: Careful attention must be given to the selection of an LZ but the infantry cannot move against enemy fortified positions while in the open without taking an unacceptable amount of casualties.

3 Recommendations: Emphasis should be placed on selecting LZ's which will afford the infantry the ability to maneuver under cover after disembarking the helicopter. Aero-Scouts and/or gun ships must carefully recon the proposed LZ prior to insertion and afford the unit commander information as to such an area being clear of enemy.

(g) CAR-15 Magazines

1 Observation: The twenty round magazine used with the CAR-15 is inadequate for scout/observers.

2 Evaluation: Observers in the OH-6A aircraft often use burst on target for fire adjustment while moving. Under normal circumstances, even the best trained observer using burst on target will run out of ammunition prior to making the kill.

3 Recommendation: Thirty or forty round magazines should be procured and issued to all LOH scout/observers.

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(h) Designating Pinpoint Targets From the OH-6A

1 Observation: Crews of the OH-6A have only a limited capability to designate pinpoint targets for the organic gun teams or requested MAC Air.

2 Evaluation: The primary method of marking targets from the OH-6A is to have the aircraft overfly the target, enabling the observer to drop a smoke grenade on the location. No provisions are available to allow the aircraft to stand-off with a marking device.

3 Recommendation: The OH-6A should have a small 2.75 rocket tube or other device for marking installed on the aircraft to provide the scout with a limited marking capability at a stand-off distance.

(i) Fire Direction and Control Between OV-1 and AH-1G Teams

1 Observation: Hot spots that are located by Mohawk (OV-1) reconnaissance aircraft are frequently missed by AH-1G fire teams.

2 Evaluation: Due to the difficulty in target acquisition inherent in the AH-1G during night operations, targets detected electronically by the OV-1 are often missed or undetected. Attempts made by OV-1 pilots to vector the Cobra in on target are only marginally successful because of a frequent lack of distinct reference points at night. Aerial flares are not adequate to adjust fire unless their illumination discloses a definite reference point such as a canal intersection.

3 Recommendations: That aerial flares, when used as target markers, be dropped from a lower altitude with a delayed ignition setting. This causes the flare to continue burning on the ground where it offers an excellent reference point for fire direction.

(j) Operational Altitudes for AH-1G

1 Observation: During night operations on OPERATION BLACKHAWK it was found that low altitudes by the AH-1G and the use of landing or search lights involves too much risk and detracts from the effectiveness of weapons systems.

2 Evaluation: Results from low level visual recon utilizing search and landing lights are almost negative. One must fly at 30-40 knots and 50 feet in order for lights to be effective. This technique should be discouraged for three reasons:

- a Results do not justify the risk.
- b Restricted pilot vision, vertigo from the focus of attention on one point and parallax from the plexiglass.
- c The employment of the mini-gun at night gives the enemy

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a reference point at which to fire. A 50 caliber AA weapon will "walk" right up the TLT tracer fire to the aircraft.

2 Recommendation: A minimum ceiling be established for employment of the AH-1G at night to be 2000 feet. Minimum search altitude for the AH-1G should be 1000 feet absolute. Gun runs should terminate not lower than 500 feet absolute.

(k) Employment of AH-1G With Flare Ship

1 Observation: Without flare ship(s), the capability of the AH-1G is drastically reduced in the Delta on night operations.

2 Evaluation: Orientation on target without flares or ground reference points is impossible during night operations on OPERATION BLACKHAWK.

3 Recommendation: The AH-1G will not be employed at night without a flare ship. Exception to this policy would be when troops are on the ground and in contact. Then the use of hand held flares or lights, plus heading from known points to the targets may be used.

(3) Training:

In-Country Training

1 Observation: The Squadron does not have the capability, equipment or facilities to adequately establish a school to cover the necessary in-country training required by USARV Reg 350-1.

2 Evaluation: The 7/1 ACS has established a training program to give all personnel newly arrived in country the required training. D Troop conducts the small but adequate training course for all squadron personnel. However, there are too many factors that restrict and hamper the organization and operation of this course. The training must be conducted IAW D Troop's operational requirements which vary and change on short notice frequently. It is difficult to plan a class starting next week when the possibility of D Troop being at Vinh Long is uncertain that far in advance. The Squadron has no other suitable means of completing required in-country training unless D Troop conducts this instruction.

3 Recommendation: A in-country school be established in IV Corps for all new personnel in the Delta that could be established and run at a centrally located place such as Can Tho. A cadre could be assigned that could set up an adequate course of instruction for all personnel. This would prevent the requirement for each unit in the Delta to establish its own in-country indoctrination schools.

(4) Intelligence:

Dissemination of Information

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1 Observation: Little or no information gained from detainees or POW's is disseminated to lower units.

2 Evaluation: Information gained from POW's or detainees could be invaluable in the planning of day to day operations in OPERATION BLACKHAWK. At the present time, when a detainee is delivered into Vietnamese channels, little or no information gets into the hands of the units able to react effectively. Information of immediate tactical value is normally received too late for units to react with any favorable results.

3 Recommendation: Emphasis needs to be placed in S-2 channels to insure that information is passed to the unit requiring intelligence information with all possible speed. Coordination between Corps and Province Chiefs concerned to expedite this dissemination should result in increased operational effectiveness.

(5) Logistics: None

(6) Organization:

(a) Change in TO&E for D Troop to Armored Personnel Carriers

1 Observation: The present TO&E for D Troop, 7/1 ACS should be changed to equip the ground troop with personnel carriers in lieu of wheeled vehicles.

2 Evaluation: On all Delta operations in which D Troop has participated, the troop's capabilities have been severely limited by the organic wheeled vehicles. From 10-19 July 68, D Troop operated in the 44th Special Tactical Zone south of Chi Lang with a mission to provide a blocking force along the east side of a mountain. Due to the restriction imposed by the inadequate and destroyed roads for wheeled vehicles, the troop could not completely block the entire east side. The wheeled vehicles could not travel down the torn up road and could not travel on the sides due to the soft ground. They could not completely accomplish this assigned mission due to the limitations of their organic vehicles. D Troop spent one entire afternoon in an attempt to free three vehicles from bogged down mud conditions prior to the tide completely engulfing the equipment. At the same time, they were exposing personnel and equipment to small arms and mortar fire from the mountain. Wheeled vehicles on practically every mission in the Delta severely limit the capabilities of the highly mobile ground reconnaissance troop.

3 Recommendation: The TO&E for D Troop, 7/1 ACS be changed to replace the present wheeled vehicles with armored personnel carriers. The mobility and flexibility of the troop would be greatly improved to better assist the Squadron on Delta Operations.

(7) Other:

Effects of Weather on Day-Night Operations in the Delta

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1. Observation: The rainy season in the Delta has not affected the overall operations of the Squadron to any significant degree.

2. Evaluation: The rainy season has not affected the daylight operations of the Squadron to any noticeable degree. The night border interdiction missions conducted on OPERATION BLACKHAWK have been cancelled on several occasions due to low ceilings and poor visibility in the Chi Long area. Approximately 15% of scheduled night Mohawk-Cobra missions along the border have been cancelled due to weather.

3. Recommendation: Emphasis is required to insure all pilots assigned night missions and early morning take-offs during the rainy season check the weather forecasts closely prior to scheduled flights, especially in the Seven Mountains area where elevations reach nearly 2500 feet.

Robert W. Mills

ROBERT W. MILLS
LTC, Armor
Commanding

- 5 Incl
1. Significant Activities
2. Cumulative Losses
3. --Weapons-Captured-on-Operation-28-29-Jun-68-in
Kien-Tuong-Province-
4. --(A-TR00P;-7/1-Sache-Find)-Quarterly-Period-Ending-
-31-July-1968-
5. --Equipment-Captured-and-Destroyed-During-Operation-
-BLACKHAWK-

Incl 3, 4 and 5 Withdrawn, HQ, DA

AVGN (31 July 68) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry For
Period Ending 31 July 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65) (R1) (UIC: WG26AA)

DA, HQ, 164TH AVIATION GROUP, APO 96215 25 August 1968

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. The attached 7/1 ACS ORLL for the period ending 31 July 1968 has been evaluated by this Headquarters as required by USARV Reg 525-15.

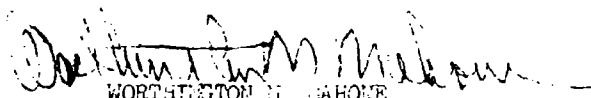
2. All intelligence information available to this Headquarters is now passed to all subordinate units by the fastest means available.

3. Section 2. Lessons Learned, Commanders Observation, Evaluations and Recommendations.

a. Non-crew Member Pay for AH-1G Crew Chiefs: Non-concur with recommendation. There is no requirement for AH-1G crew chiefs to participate in aerial flight. Such a precedent would necessitate a requirement for crew pay for O-1, OH-6, U-6, OH-13, U-8 and a multitude of other type aircraft crew chiefs.

b. Operational Altitudes for AH-1G: An evaluation of minimum operational altitudes for the AH-1G has been conducted. This Headquarters has established and recommends 500 feet as a minimum operational altitude.

4. With the exceptions noted above, this Headquarters concurs with the Commander's observations, evaluations and recommendations.


WORTHINGTON H. MAHONE
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:
2 DA, ATTN: ACSFOR
1 CG, 1st Avn Bde, ATTN: AVBA-C

SEE APPENDIX 1, PAGE 24

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AVBA-C (31 July 68) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry for
Period Ending 31 July 1968 (ECS CSFOR-65) (R1)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384

SEP 22 1968

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST,
APO 96375
Commander-In-Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT,
APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed this report, considers it to be adequate, and concurs with the contents as indorsed except for the following:

Section II, para A(1)(c), page 11: Nonconcurrent mission actions directed by this headquarters have involved transfer of personnel with like grade and MOS, except that grade substitution latitude has been extended to no more than one grade difference. Evaluation of state of training of individuals to be infused is not practical.

2. (C) The following additional comments are considered pertinent:

a. Section I, para a,(5)(e), page 8: The 51st Light Equipment Maintenance Company at Vinh Long provides direct support to the 7th Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry with a 4 man detachment. This detachment does not have personnel to repair AN/VHC-12 series radios. The signal officer of the 7/1st ACS made arrangements with the 2d Maintenance Battalion, Vung Tau, to repair this equipment. This headquarters has coordinated with Saigon Support Command to assign the proper personnel to the DS unit at Vinh Long.

b. Section II, para A(1)(a), 3b, page 10: The Officer Placement Branch, USARV, states that all AH-1G qualified aviators are assigned against flying positions to maintain a minimum of two qualified aviators per AH-1G aircraft. This headquarters has coordinated with USARV with reference to the input of senior grade officers qualified in the AH-1G. In a message to DA, USARV Officer Placement Branch has requested that only junior commissioned officers and warrant officers be programmed to attend the AH-1G school at USAAVNS. While this does not resolve the immediate shortage of operational AH-1G aviators, it is anticipated that the recommendation to DA will result in a larger percentage of junior grade aviators being selected for future AH-1G training classes. It is the policy of the 1st Aviation Brigade that only operational aviators be selected to attend the USARV AH-1G training school.

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AVBA-C

SEP 22 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry for
Period Ending 31 July 1968 (HQS CSFOR-65) (R1)

c. Section II, para A(1)(b), page 10: Concur. The evaluation and recommendations by 7/1 Cav are valid and further emphasize the problems encountered and the loss of overall effectiveness resulting from fragmenting the assets of an Air Cavalry Squadron. The TOE for the Air Cavalry Squadron was carefully designed to enable the squadron to operate effectively as a combat unit in its primary mission as a reconnaissance and security force and to allow the individual troops to operate independently from the squadron for short periods of time when necessary. The degradation of the administrative and logistical support capability provided by the squadron for its organic troops is only one of the adverse effects of attaching its organic elements to other organizations for extended periods of time. The employment of the air cavalry squadron as it was designed i.e. as a squadron, rather than a pool of air cavalry troops or aircraft assets would solve many of the problems currently experienced by the air cavalry squadrons.

d. Section II, para A(1)(d), page 11 and para 3a, 1st Ind: The non-eligibility of AH-1G crew chiefs for flight pay is a serious morale and motivation problem. The highly qualified UP-1 crew chief, a principle source of crew chiefs for the AH-1G, becomes ineligible for flight pay when he is assigned to a crew chief position with the more complex aircraft. The problem will be intensified in the future by the introduction of additional AH-1G's and eventually, the AH-56A. As aerial weapons vehicles become more sophisticated, there is a comparable extension of the scope of knowledge and responsibility required of crew chiefs for those aircraft. Recognition of the increased responsibilities and level of skill required of AH-1G crew chiefs should be provided through authorization of a higher pay grade or an increase in proficiency pay designator for their LOS.

e. Section II, para A(2)(a), page 11: Finding and fixing the enemy is traditionally and doctrinally the mission of the cavalry units. The technique recommended to provide a withdrawal route for the enemy in order to force him to expose and subject himself to friendly fires has some application as an economy of force measure to inflict casualties on the enemy while minimizing risk to friendly forces but should not be employed as the standard procedure. Experience in RVN has shown over and over again, that if the enemy is given the slightest avenue of withdrawal, that many will escape, and contact will be lost and extremely difficult to regain. The standard objective should normally be, to fix the enemy and maintain contact whenever circumstances permit. If the air elements of the cavalry unit are able to fix the enemy by their presence then they have accomplished their intended mission.

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AVBA-C

SEP 22 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry for
Period Ending 31 July 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65) (RI)

f. Section II, para A(2)(b), page 12: This evaluation and recommendation is valid and reflects the loss of effectiveness of the application of any form of combat power when habit patterns are established. The recommended technique should prove effective if judiciously applied. However it should not become the standard technique to replace others, or it too, will become a habit pattern and will lose its effectiveness.

g. Section II, para A(2)(c), page 12: Concur. Use of air cavalry elements for such missions reflects a common misconception that the air cavalry squadron is a pool of aircraft assets rather than a combat unit designed to accomplish the cavalry mission. Aviation units are designed and intended to perform these strike and escort missions. They should be assigned to perform them rather than degrade the capability of the air cavalry unit to accomplish its primary mission.

h. Section II, para A(2)(f), page 13: While this recommendation does not reveal a new lesson learned, it is valid. Selection of LZs is explained in detail in Chapter 12, 1st Aviation Brigade Operations Manual.

i. Section II, para A(2)(h), page 14: There are four systems which fire 2.75" rockets for marking purposes being evaluated at this time under an ENSURE project. The system consists of four rocket tubes and a firing panel. This device, if satisfactory, will provide the capability of target marking at a stand-off distance from the OH-6A.

j. Section II, para A(3), page 15: S-3 164th Group has been advised by this headquarters to coordinate mandatory initial in-country training for 7/1 Cavalry replacements with 9th Inf Div at Dong Tam. 9th Inf Div has an established school which is in continuous operation to provide this training and has accepted students from 1st Avn Bde units on a regular basis.

k. Section II, para A(6)(a), page 16: Substitution of armored personnel carriers for wheeled vehicles in the ground cavalry troop merits further investigation. This headquarters is currently conducting a MTOE study of air cavalry units and the subject of track vehicles for those units will be thoroughly evaluated.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



J. D. SEGAL
1LT, AGC
ASST ADJUTANT GENERAL

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AVHGC-DST (31 Jul 68) 3d Ind (C) MAJ Klingman/ds/LBN 4433
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry For
Period Ending 31 July 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65) (R1) (UIC: WGZ6AA)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 7 OCT 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPDP-DT,
APO 96558

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 July 1968 from Headquarters, 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry.

2. (C) Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning noncrew member pay for AH-1G crew chiefs, page 11, paragraph A(1)(d); 1st Indorsement, paragraph 3a; and 2d Indorsement, paragraph 2d: Concur with 1st Indorsement. While it is recognized that unit commanders must take positive action to preclude a deterioration of morale during the transition period, there is no justification for additional pay for these crew chiefs.

b. Reference item concerning operational altitudes for AH-1G, page 14, paragraph A(2)(j); and 1st Indorsement, paragraph 3b: Nonconcur. The tactics employed in the accomplishment of any particular combat mission depend upon the commander's evaluation of the mission requirements versus the limitations of his aviators and aircraft. Imposition of a command-wide minimum operational altitude would interfere with a commander's flexibility in responding to mission requirements.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

W.C. Arntz
W. C. ARNTZ
CI TAGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
HQ 1st Avn Bde
HQ 7/1 Cav

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GPOP-DT (31 Jul 68) 4th Ind (U)

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cav
for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1) (U)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 28 OCT 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorse-
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

C. A. Shortt
C. A. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 164th Aviation Group
APO San Francisco 96215

AVGN

23 September 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry for
the Period Ending 31 July 1968. (RCS CSFOR - 65) (RI)

Commanding General
1st Aviation Brigade
APO San Francisco 96384

1. The following command and staff actions have been initiated or taken to alleviate problems or implement recommendations stated in 7/1 ACS ORLL for the period ending 31 July 68, and forwarded by 1st Ind, this Headquarters 25 August 1968.

a. Personnel:

(1) AH-1G Qualified Aviators.

(a) Concur with the recommendations. The assignment of more AH-1G qualified company grade officers and warrant officers will permit greater flexibility for assignment at company/troop level. Aviators should not be selected for AH-1G transition based on rank alone. The AH-1G, an aerial weapons platform, must however be operated by the most mature and experienced pilots available.

(b) This Headquarters has received three quotas for in-country AH-1G transition training during the period August - September 1968. The feasibility of AH-1G transition at unit level should be considered with the full recognition that individuals selected for unit transition should be the most experienced and skilled UH-1B/C pilots.

(2) Fragmentation of Headquarters Personnel: Concur with recommendation. Due to the geographical location of the Squadron Headquarters its organic troops and B Troop which is detached, it is not possible to provide timely personnel administrative support to all organic elements from one location, yet the Squadron does not have adequate personnel to detach record clerks to another unit. Splitting a Squadron between aviation groups in two corps areas widely separated compounds personnel administrative problems and should be avoided on a permanent basis.

(3) Assignment of Officers and Enlisted Men: Every effort is being made by this Headquarters to replace infused personnel with personnel having similar experience however experienced replacements are not always available. Many personnel upon arrival from CONUS are used to fill slots

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SUBJECT: Operational Report of 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry
for the Period Ending 31 July 1968. (RCS CSFOR - 65) (RI)

vacated by infused officers and enlisted men. This method reduces the turbulence by requiring only one individual per authorized slot to be moved. Any infusion program that would require more exact qualifications and experience than MOS, grade and DEROS would become overly complicated and infeasible. Most of our young officers and men acquire their experience during the first six months in RVN and this is the time at which infusion is most likely to occur. Over a period of one year, a unit should infuse the same degree of experience as it infuses out. Even though the specific slot vacated by an experienced individual is not necessarily the slot filled by an experienced individual, the level of experience throughout the unit should remain the same.

(4) Non-crew Member Pay for AH-1G Crew Chiefs: Non-concur with the recommendation. There is no requirement for AH-1G crew chiefs to participate in aerial flight. Such a precedent would necessitate a requirement for non-crew member pay for O-1, OH-6, U-6, OH-13, U-8 and a multitude of other type aircraft crew chiefs. AH-1G crew chiefs could be compensated for their additional skills by receiving a higher level of proficiency pay.

b. Operations:

(1) Visual Reconnaissance: Concur with the recommendation as stated. This technique of air cavalry employment is presently being utilized within this command. A Corps letter of instruction on air cavalry employment is being disseminated to all advisory elements in IV Corps

(2) TOT with CS: Concur with the recommendation as stated. This method of artillery employment should produce considerably more enemy casualties and has been referred to the ground advisors for consideration.

(3) Employment of Fire Teams: Concur with the recommendation as stated. Action recommended has been completed by this Headquarters in conjunction with the IV CTZ Advisory Team.

(4) Identification of LRRP's During Night Operations: Concur with the recommendation as stated. Hand held flares are now available to 7/3 ACS patrols. Pocket strobe lights are presently on requisition. Supported infantry unit advisors have strobe lights and hand held flares available.

(5) Utilization of Cobra/Mohawk Hunter Killer Teams: Concur with that portion which states that the curfew should be enforced. This Headquarters does not have authority to enforce established curfew hours for personnel other than assigned individuals. This problem has been brought to the attention of local GVN Officials, however with 40% of the entire RVN population located in the Delta, little success has been achieved in curfew enforcement. Even with curfew hours being enforced,

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SUBJECT: Operational Report of 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry
for the Period Ending 31 July 1968. (RCS CSFOR-65)(R1)

established "Rules of Engagement" must be observed to prevent injury to friendly personnel who may be traveling for emergency purposes.

(6) Selection of Landing Zones: Concur with the recommendation. When possible, LZs are selected which permit troops to take advantage of the cover provided by the terrain when advancing on an objective. When troops are landed in open LZs and advance in open areas, they are provided cover by armed helicopters.

(7) CAR-15 Magazines: Concur with the recommendation. The current XM27E1 weapons system installed on the OH-6A scout helicopter is very effective in neutralizing targets of opportunity, however, due to jamming and ammunition expenditure there are times when the CAR-15 remains the only operational weapon on board. Additional magazines are now being carried in order to insure a readily available supply of ammunition for marking purposes.

(8) Designating Pinpoint Targets from the OH-6A: Concur with the recommendation as stated. Target overflight in an observation helicopter has proven to be a dangerous practice. Targets can be marked now using the XM-27 weapons system with a mixture of tracer ammunition without undue exposure of the aircraft and crew.

(9) Fire Direction and Control between OV-1 and AH-1G Teams: Dropping flares at an altitude which will allow burning on the ground is not recommended by this Headquarters. The possibility of causing damage to friendly personnel and property by fire offsets the small advantage gained by having a ground reference point especially since winds aloft cause flares which illuminate a specific point to land away from the point in question.

(10) Operational Altitudes for AH-1G: An evaluation of minimum operational altitudes for gunships has been conducted by this headquarters. The low level gunship tactics long associated with the UH-1B/C have not proven to be totally compatible with the AH-1G. The Cobra, because of its more sophisticated armament system and higher speed does not and should not have to operate at the most vulnerable altitudes in the deadman zone (50-500 ft). In IV CTZ, due to the flat terrain, the AH-1G is totally exposed from the rear on its break and does not have the advantage of covering door gunners who can fire down and to the rear. Further, in the closed cockpit, it is virtually impossible to detect ground fire unless the aircraft sustains a hit. In view of these considerations, the AH-1G is considered more vulnerable at lower altitudes and the full advantage of its improved performance is not capitalized upon to remain above the most vulnerable altitudes. This Headquarters has established and recommends 500 feet as a minimum operational altitude for the AH-1G.

(11) Employment of AH-1G with Flare Ship: Concur with recommendation. Flare ships are presently employed with the AH-1G on night operations.

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SUBJECT: Operational Report of 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry
for the Period Ending 31 July 1968. (RCS CSFOR - 65) (RI)

c. Training:

In Country Training: The establishment of an in-country orientation school in the Group would further drain personnel from assigned duties to operate the school. Coordination is being effected with the US Ninth Infantry Division for quotas to their in-country training school for the ground elements of the 7/1 ACS.

d. Intelligence:

Dissemination of Information: All intelligence information available to this Headquarters is now consolidated in the Daily Intelligence Summary and transmitted by the fastest means available to all organic units. The INTSUM is dispatched at 1800 hours daily. Pertinent spot reports are forwarded to subordinate units as appropriate.


e. Organization:

Change in TO&E for D Troop to Armored Personnel Carriers: Concur with the recommendation. Armored Personnel Carriers have better trafficability and are better suited to the terrain in IV CTZ. MTOE change to include this item is being prepared by 7/1 ACS at this time.

f. Other:

Effects of Weather on Day - Night Operations in the Delta: Concur with the recommendation. All pilots of this command receive a weather briefing prior to each mission and only the most experienced pilots are assigned when marginal weather conditions exist. On operational missions where weather may adversely affect the mission, a weather aircraft is normally dispatched to precede the flight and make appropriate weather checks.

2. Request that the foregoing comments be appended to the 25 August 1968 1st Indorsement to subject ORLL by this Headquarters.


WORTHINGTON M. MAHONE
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

2 DA, ATTN: ACSFOR
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Inclosure #1 (Significant Activities) to Operational Report Lessons Learned For
Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1968 RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

1. Section 1. Operations: Significant Activities.

a. There are no changes or additions to the unit mission.

b. Organization:

<u>Assigned Units</u>	<u>M/R VICINITY</u>	<u>UNIT LOCATION</u>	<u>APO</u>
7th Sqdn, 1st Air Cav	WGZ6AA	Vinh Long	96357
Headquarters Troop	WGZ6TO	Vinh Long	96357
A Troop (Air)	WGZ6AO	Vinh Long	96357
C Troop (Air)	WGZ6CO	Vinh Long	96357
D Troop (Ground)	WGZ6DO	Vinh Long	96357

<u>Detached Units</u>			
E Troop (Air) (Atch 3/17)	WGZ6BO	Di An	96289

<u>Attached Units/Sections</u>			
Personnel Section (Auth by INOE)			
E Platoon (HHT M/R)		Vinh Long	96357
3d Sig Det	WCG9AA	Vinh Long	96357
819th Sig Det	WDXJAA	Vinh Long	96357
370th TC Det	WEB3TO	Vinh Long	96357
371st TC Det	WEB4AA	Vinh Long	96357

c. Command:

(1) During the reporting period the following major changes in command and staff positions occurred.

(a) Major Charles E. Toomer, 05312073, assumed the duties of Squadron S-2 on 4 May 68, replacing Captain Charles E. Macchiaroli, OF101570.

(b) Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Mills, 098701, assumed command of the Squadron on 6 May 68, replacing Lieutenant Colonel Charles E. Canedy, 068937.

(c) Major Albert F. Rodriguez, 02102995, assumed command of Troop C on 6 May 68, replacing Major Arthur L. Finch Jr., 087515.

(d) Major Arthur L. Finch Jr., 087515, assumed duties of Squadron S-3 on 6 May 68, replacing Major Albert F. Rodriguez, 02102995.

(e) Major Roger D. Winslow Jr., 05007767, assumed duties of Squadron S-2 on 5 June 68, replacing Major Charles E. Toomer, 05312073.

(f) Major John P. Doyle, 05512498, assumed command of Troop B on 6 June 68, replacing Major William E. Beaty, OF109512.

(g) Major William J. Amberger, 05310717, assumed duties of Squadron S-4 on 24 July 68, replacing Major John W. White Jr., 02300795.

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(2) The following Officers arrived on 29 July 68 with KD & RL teams and are attached to the squadron:

Major James H. Weaver, 090548, 371st TC Det
 1LT Barry G. Camp, 05240422, 370th TC Det
 CW2 James G. Addington Jr., W3200867, 819th Sig Det
 CW2 Harold E. Lorey, W3153597, 3d Sig Det

(3) The following are personnel occupying major command and staff positions.

(a) LTC Robert W. Mills	Squadron Commander
(b) MAJ Herschel B. Stephens	Squadron Executive Officer
(c) CPT Stanley S. Fracker III	Adjutant
(d) MAJ Roger D. Winslow Jr.	S-2
(e) MAJ Arthur L. Finch Jr.	S-3
(f) MAJ William J. Amberger	S-4
(g) CPT Gene Huntzinger	Chaplain
(h) CPT Richard E. Beller	Signal Officer
(i) CPT Anthony S. Alaimo Jr.	Flight Surgeon
(j) MAJ John M. Bostdorf	Safety Officer
(k) MAJ Harold L. Johnson	Maintenance Officer
(l) MAJ John F. Glenn	CO, Headquarters Troop
(m) MAJ James R. Hill	CO, A Troop
(n) MAJ John P. Doyle	CO, B Troop
(o) MAJ Albert F. Rodriguez	CO, C Troop
(p) MAJ Richard A. Thompson	CO, D Troop

d. Unit Strength

(1) Military:

UNIT	OFF		WO		EM		TOTAL	
	AUTH	O/H	AUTH	O/H	AUTH	O/H	AUTH	O/H
HHT	23	24	7	7	183	192	213	223
A TRP	18	16	30	31	112	112	160	159
C TRP	18	17	30	25	112	105	160	147
D TRP	5	5	0	0	127	113	132	128
7/1 ACS	109	107	67	63	534	522	665	647

(2) Civilian:

SUBORDINATE UNITS	TECH REPS		U.S. CIVILIAN		VN		3D NET		CONTRACTOR O/H
	AUTH	O/H	AUTH	O/H	AUTH	O/H	AUTH	O/H	
HHT	2	2	10	10	10	10	0	0	0
A TRP	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0
B TRP	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0
C TRP	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0
D TRP	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0
7/1 ACS	2	2	10	10	30	30	0	0	0

(3) Overall assigned/attached strength increased during the reporting period as follows:

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<u>DATE</u>	<u>OFFICER</u>	<u>WARRANT OFFICER</u>	<u>ENLISTED MEN</u>
31 May 68	56+1	65	544+87
30 Jun 68	54+1	58	536+90
31 Jul 68	62+3	65+4	522+223

- e. Aircraft authorized on hand: See Tab A
- f. Cumulative Results: See Tab B

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Tab A (Aircraft Authorized and On Hand) to Incl 1 to Operational Report Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period
Ending 31 July 1968

Subordinate Unit	UH-1C(A)		UH-1H		AH-1G		OH-6A		UH-1H	
	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H	Auth	O/H
HHT	0	0	6	5	0	0	0	0	6	5
A TRP	2	2	6	6	9	9	10	10	27	27
C TRP	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>27</u>
7/1 ACS	2	2	18	17	18	18	20	20	60	59

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TAB A to Incl 1

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Tab B (Cumulative Results) to Operational Report of 7th Armored Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry For Period
Ending 31 July 1968, ACS CSFOR-65 (RU)

UNIT	SORTIES	TROOPS LIFTED	CARGO TONS	FW KIA (HC)	STRUCTURES D.C. DEST	SQUADS D.C. DEST	ALCRAFT D.C. DEST
HHT	603	831	61	43	0	0	2
A TRP	5915	4274	54	457	22	243	8
C TRP	5297	5916	16	493	150	474	130
D TRP	0	0	0	60	0	0	0
7/1 ACS	11795	11021	131	1053	172	717	138
							458
							75
							6

AIRCRAFT BY TYPE

OH6A Destroyed	5
OH6A Damaged	31
UH1H Destroyed	0
UH1H Damaged	3
UH1C Destroyed	0
UH1C Damaged	10
AH1G Destroyed	1
AH1G Damaged	31
TOTAL	81

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TAB B to
Inc 1

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Inclosure #2 (Cumulative losses, to Operational Report of 7th Armored Squadron
1st Air Cavalry For Period Ending 31 July 1968, RGS CSFOR-65 (U1)

FROM 1 MAY TO 30 JULY

<u>DNOS</u>	<u>KILLED IN ACTION</u>	<u>WOUNDED IN ACTION</u>	<u>RETURNED TO DUTY</u>
61204	1	13	9
11B20	1	5	4
11D40	0	7	4
11D40	0	3	1
11C20	1	0	0
11G10	0	1	1
11D20	2	2	1
67A1F	0	2	2
67I'20	0	4	2
052B	0	6	2
67V20	0	4	2
52B20	1	0	0
67A10	0	1	0
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>28</u>

Incl 2

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Security Classification

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